

To the Idaho Falls Public Library Board of Trustees:

Thank you for allowing us time on your agenda for this meeting. We are members of the Friends of the Iona Library board (called FOIL for short). We have been functioning since 2002 when community volunteers felt the need to have a community library within the city of Iona. The city council offered a room in the basement of the city building. By soliciting grants, donations of books, money and time, this small library began, being open about 6 hours per week. We held a weekly story time. We sponsored summer reading programs and a summer reading celebrations. We promoted and held writing contests for students and adults. We held fundraisers where the community and many businesses came and supported our efforts.

In about 2006, we were approached about becoming a branch library of the Idaho Falls Public Library. Frankly it was a dilemma. It meant a certain loss of control over what had been a huge undertaking to come as far as we had. A Friends of the Iona Library board meeting was held to discuss this possible change. The discussion went back and forth over what we wanted to do. In the end, it was decided that what we as a board wanted, was not as important as what would be good for the community of Iona and surrounding areas. And so the agreement details were negotiated between the city of Iona and you, the Idaho Falls Public Library Board of Trustees.

A large reason for our being here today is our desire to let you know how thankful we are for these 16 years of cooperation and service between the city of Iona, the personnel from the Idaho Falls Library, and you, the Idaho Falls Library Board of Trustees. It is wonderful to have it open Monday through Saturday, five hours a day!

We know children, families and adults have benefitted from a library in Iona. As readers, we also loved having a place to choose a book or a DVD and being able to order a reading materials from the wonderful selection within the Idaho Falls library and having it delivered to a library which is so close to our homes.

During these years we have had wonderful librarians who learn your name and know your reading preferences. We hear often how willing they are to help find another good book or make suggestions. When we walk into the library, it is always welcoming, organized and professional-looking. It has been a great place to spend time in.

We have had great support from Robert Wright. He attended our FOIL meetings often, giving advice and suggestions. When we had money from fundraisers to benefit the Iona Library, he offered to purchase the shelving, books and other supplies using the resources and contacts he has for getting the most for our money. He was there to help with remodeling and installing book shelves. Robert even wrote a grant request from CHC Foundation for \$5000 with the FOIL Board matching the grant with \$1000. This was used to purchase 6 units of shelving that were installed in the children and youth room of our library and to build a larger book drop, needed because of the increased number of patrons using our community library. In addition, Robert Wright was most always at our fundraisers, usually with his family supporting us. It meant a lot to us. Thank you, Robert, for your association with the Friends of the Iona Library.

Members of our board met with Robert Wright at the Iona Library on June 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss the dissolving of the agreement signed in 2006. We discussed what would be removed and taken back to the IFPL, and

what could remain with the Iona Library. He also told us that in actuality, you, the IFPL Board of Trustees hold the decision-making authority. We understood that we should make our appeals directly to you. That is a small part of the reason we are here today.

We are sorry to have our association with the good people and wonderful resources of the Idaho Falls Public Library end. We realize that there are legalities that must be followed but we come today hoping that both the Idaho Falls Public Library and the Iona Community Library can continue to thrive as we serve our communities. Important to us is the fact that when the agreement was signed in 2006, Iona had a functioning library with resources in place that were brought into the agreement. You have received a folder with the list of inventory that the Iona Library had at the time of the agreement. You will also see a summary of money that was fundraised for the purpose of benefitting Iona Community Library since 2006. In addition there is a copy of our presentation here tonight for you to study further, if you wish.

We come to you believing that we can all agree that a library is more than just a room. It cannot be a library without books and shelving. In order to do this, we hope you will feel this same desire to have shelves that are filled with books in the Iona Community library.

We have recently come to understand that the Iona City Clerk/Treasurer, Keri West and Robert Wright have worked to come to agreements that will serve to preserve a working Iona Community Library while at the same time benefitting the priorities of you, the Idaho Falls Public Board of Trustees and the Idaho Falls Public Library. On August 16<sup>th</sup>, the Iona City Council approved funds for the purchase of 24 units of shelving. The City of Iona has been and continues to be supportive and we are grateful. We also became aware that some shelving will be left at the Iona Library as other units will be moved to the IFPL. It is a win/win place for both our libraries to be. We have hope that you will also be willing to help us to fill those shelves with reading books. For all this help, we again express our gratitude.

We, the Friends of the Iona Library, plan to still support our little library in the same manner we always have. We still have the same goals: increasing public awareness of the library and its resources and promoting literacy and reading in Iona and the surrounding communities. Fundraising will continue. As from our beginnings, we still want what is best for people who love to read, who are instilling that love of reading in their children and grandchildren and we can do that by making books and other reading material readily available in a community library.

Thank you for allowing us time for this presentation. Please note that we have brought a poster with a pictorial representation of the history of the Iona Community Library and hope you will take the time to look at this history.

Sincerely,

Karen Johnson, Aubrey Dokos, Alesia Schwieder, Debbie Denning, Loa Jenkins, Heather Elwood

Friends of the Iona Library Board